

Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Oct. 2, 2008

Paul Branson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

Members in attendance: Janet Abelson, Ken Altenburger, Joe Bischofberger, Myrtle Braxton, Richard Burnett, David Grant, Gene Halliday, Rich Hedges, Marshall Loring, Josh Miele, Dennis Trenten, Doug Weir, Craig Yates. Members reported as unavailable: Eleanor Bloch, Julio Lacayo, Shirlee Zane.

EDAC Minutes of Sept. 4, 2008 - Mr. Loring said that concrete barriers between bicycle and vehicular lanes in Montreal are curb-like (are not walls). The Minutes were approved as corrected after a motion by Mr. Hedges and a second by Mr. Halliday.

Member Updates

--Mr. Trenten said bus route #78 now serves Walnut Creek BART. He noted that it's the only bus route between Benicia and Vallejo, and that in Benicia, the bus has only one stop -- downtown.

--Mr. Yates reported a name change by the Transportation and Land Use Coalition to a new name: Transform. He announced their next event: Oct. 29th, 101-2nd St., San Francisco, 5-8 p.m.

--Mr. Loring announced San Mateo County's new 'community conversations' to collect citizen ideas about housing development (in a setting of eight people plus a moderator).

Sponsors include county supervisors and businesses.

--Mr. Burnett said groundbreaking for replacement of Vallejo's transit facility is scheduled for spring 2009.

--Mr. Hedges reported that he is trying not to use his car for one week. He said he has needed to drive only two miles so far.

--Ms. Braxton reported that some AC Transit bus stops in Richmond are not properly lit, making them unsafe. The lights are being turned off for energy savings.

Advisory Council Report

Highlights from Mr. Grant's report referenced Council discussion of the region's focused-growth initiative, and the opening up of MTC's contracting process. On high-speed rail in California, he reported that Quentin Kopp was unable to attend to give his report.

Noting a vacancy in the Council's representation from EDAC's elderly category since Mr. Belkin resigned, Mr. Hedges suggested that Ms. Braxton fill the vacant spot. In response, Chair Branson said he was appointing Mr. Lacayo to the Council but that he would consider Ms. Braxton next.

Mr. Loring said he believes the elderly and the disabled might belong in the disadvantaged business enterprises grouping (DBEs). [Ms. Vogler reported that DBE is not related to age or disability but to ethnicity and gender.]

EDAC Subcommittee Reports

Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee Chair Burnett reported unanimous approval, with minor changes, of the group's policy statement on emergency preparedness for EDAC's consideration.

Transportation and Land Use Subcommittee Co-chair Hedges said today's meeting will include discussion of training opportunities for making community presentations of the subcommittee's TLU work "to magnify its success."

Pedestrian Subcommittee Chair Grant said that at next month's meeting discussion will include possibilities for helping to develop a possible pedestrian plan for the region.

Chair's Report

Mr. Branson said EDAC's strength continues to be its members working on important issues in subcommittees. He made note of the pervasive economic strife at state and national levels, saying it ought not diminish opportunity for members to sustain EDAC's good work and continue supporting each other.

Legislative Report

Rebecca Long's report began with Proposition 42, the multimodal program that funds streets and roads, transit, and highways, not being suspended this year. She credited full funding to the state proposition that passed in November 2006 (Prop. 1A) requiring any suspension of Prop. 42 to be repaid with interest within three years (legislators recognized such repayment as making trouble in future years). This year, Prop. 42 is estimated to provide \$1.4 billion. Prop. 42 is funded by the sales tax on gasoline. At the same time, the budget diverted a record \$1.4 billion in spillover funds, funded by a portion of gasoline sales taxes. The 'spillover' is triggered when gas prices are growing at a faster rate than the overall economy. Before FY 2007-08, 100 percent of spillover funds were supposed to go to the Public Transportation Account (PTA). Last year, the Legislature adopted budget trailer bill language to redirect half of the spillover funds to the General Fund, leaving the other half in the PTA. However, the FY 2008-09 budget instead redirected all spillover funds to the General Fund.

At Mr. Miele's request, Ms. Long further explained the 'spillover'. It is a formula dating to the early 1970s when the governor was Ronald Reagan and the Republican idea of fiscal prudence was to lower the state sales tax amount at the same time as expanding the sales tax to include taxing gasoline. The thinking was that if and when the inclusion of gasoline generated more revenue than there would have been had the sales tax rate been higher and gasoline not been included, then the 'spillover' would be deposited in the PTA. The aim was for the money to go to public transit with the thinking that during times of high gas prices there are greater demands on public transit.

Member comment:

- Even before the new state budget begins to be spent, there is a deficit of up to \$10B, given already-committed expenditures on high-cost items such as the prison health care system.
- Needs for transportation infrastructure are extreme - that is what the budget ought to have allowed for.
- The budget impact on transit operations is negative, and ironic given that high gas prices conflict with greater use of transit. The situation is even worse for wheelchair users who likely

need to wait for the next transit vehicle because only two wheelchairs are usually allowed.

- Next year, it appears the state will be similarly strapped for transit money, so what next? [Ms. Long anticipated the need to go to the voters to consider a constitutional amendment that would merge ‘spillover’ monies with Proposition 42 so that they are afforded the same protection under Proposition 1A.]

Ms. Long highlighted passage of SB 375 (Steinberg) that addresses greenhouse gas emissions in long-range plans, and provides incentives for local governments to build housing near transit. Mr. Hedges requested an in-depth report on SB 375 at the next meeting of EDAC so its members ‘can make a difference’. [Ms. Long agreed to make a report, with an assist from Planning.]

Staff Liaison Report - Ms. Vogler’s announcements:

- 10 a.m., October 24 - a workshop for joint advisors to give input about the next steps that will be needed after the adoption of T2035 in March 2009.
- 12 p.m., October 22 - a roundtable discussion for advisory committee chairs (including Chair Branson), members of the business community, other MTC partners (EDAC members are welcome audience members).
- EDAC resignations of Steve Belkin and Barbara Rhodes, that counting a vacancy left by Bruce Oka creates three slots to fill on EDAC (see MTC’s Web site for the application, www.mtc.ca.gov/get_involved/advisory/)
- By December 2008, Mr. Lacayo is scheduled to be approved next month as a voting member representing EDAC on the Advisory Council. Mr. Lacayo may attend the Advisory Council meeting as a full member in November.
- Next month, in November, members will make nominations for EDAC leadership positions, with the official selection taking place in December; accepting nominees will be asked for a short presentation.

In response to Mr. Burnett's query about annual ethics training renewal, and Mr. Yates' saying he had already renewed, Ms. Vogler said she would follow-up with an e-mail of the resources members can use to renew.

In response to Mr. Miele's request that forwarded e-mails from members be succinct, all agreed that the e-mail's originator is the responsible party.

Tasks for EDAC Subcommittees for FY 2008-09

Ms. Vogler reviewed the changes proposed to EDAC subcommittees, the main one being a merge of Emergency Preparedness, Accessible Taxis, and Senior Drivers into a new subcommittee focused on Mobility Management. After much discussion about when to merge subcommittees and the need for careful construction of Mobility Management, it was agreed to merge subcommittees only after a presentation is made by Planning's James Corless or Jennifer Yeamans (preferably next month). If after the presentation the new Mobility Management Subcommittee is deemed necessary, it was agreed to merge the Accessible Taxis and Senior Drivers subcommittees into the Mobility Management Subcommittee in January. The Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee will finish its current tasks and merge later (summer 2009). Perceiving a need for in-depth EDAC work on 511, TransLink[®], accessible pedestrian signals, and other technology-based projects, Mr. Miele suggested a new subcommittee focused on emerging technology and accessibility review. This subcommittee would also be formed in January.

Ms. Vogler agreed to edit the current work plan and bring it back to the committee for review and approval at the next EDAC meeting. The revised plan will be presented by Chair Branson to the Legislation Committee in December.

Accessible Taxis

Mr. Yates presented the subcommittee's Accessible Taxi Statement for approval and inclusion in EDAC's work plan. After discussion, specific directions were formulated to advise the Commission:

- Convene jurisdictions and taxi providers to discuss and clarify issues in the provision of wheelchair accessible taxi services;
- Develop model ordinances and incentives to stimulate the growth of wheelchair accessible taxi services in the region;

- Develop capital funding sources to assist in the procurement of wheelchair accessible taxi vehicles.

Before approving the Statement, it was agreed to also consider what to do about taxis that accept Lifeline funding but can't be relied on to pick up passengers who are disabled. It was also suggested to consider the inclusion of information in Braille in the backseat of taxis. It was agreed that an abbreviated version of the taxi statement would be included in the revised work plan.

Under other business, Mr. Trenten announced a new e-mail address: dtrenten@gmail.com. The next EDAC meeting is scheduled for Nov. 6, 2008. The meeting was adjourned early, at 12:15 p.m.